

WILLIE GRACE CAMPBELL—IN
MEMORIAM

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, America recently lost one of her most influential daughters, Willie Grace Campbell. Born and raised as women's suffrage took root, Willie's unwavering commitment and passion for women's rights and civil liberties gave opportunity and inspiration to those like me who knew and loved her.

In an era where career-driven women were uncommon, Willie successfully balanced the challenge of being a mother while pursuing her commitment to education and community service. After moving to Indianapolis with her husband and three children in 1945, Willie established the city's first League of Women's Voters branch and membership quickly grew. She went on to serve as the League's State President and, in 1959, ascended to the national board as a member of the Indiana Advisory Committee of the U.S. Conference on Civil Rights.

A cornerstone of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, Willie launched voter education projects in American inner cities and trained thousands of urban and suburban female voters. She participated in the first White House Conference on Civil Rights in 1965, and emerged from the conference with landmark recommendations and strategies for using litigation, in addition to legislation, to confront restrictive voting rights.

Willie expanded her advocacy in the 1970s, involving herself with the National Women's Political Caucus and the National Women's Education Fund while acting as President and Board Chairwoman of the Overseas Education Fund International. From Latin America and Africa to Washington, DC, Willie's campaign for women's equality and social justice successfully challenged the global status quo. Not surprisingly, she went on to serve on the board of Women, Law and Development International, an organization devoted to the defense and promotion of women's rights.

Even in her last days, Willie proudly served as Vice Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation, a position assigned to her by President Clinton.

Willie was a mentor, not only to me, but to many women in politics and the advocacy community. At age 90, she remained the youngest one in the group, with a ready smile, enormous energy, zest and wisdom. All who encountered her marveled at her passion and purpose.

Willie, you have raised the bar for each of us. I am honored to pay you tribute.

HONORING COACH THOMAS
BILLUPS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Coach Thomas Billups, head coach of the State Champion,

Lanier High School Boys Basketball Team. I submit the following article by Bill Spencer of the Clarion Ledger Newspaper of Jackson, Mississippi.

Fiery Coach Thomas Billups has created a dynasty. Thomas Billups doesn't want to come off as boastful, even though his success may be unmatched in the history of Mississippi high school boys basketball.

He's a staunch believer in his methods, however, and who can argue with the veteran Lanier coach's incredible run?

"I'm not saying I'm the greatest coach ever," said Billups, whose Bulldogs (34-3) won their final 19 games and finished No. 1 in The Clarion-Ledger Super 10 rankings for the second consecutive year. "There are a lot of good coaches out there. I'm not saying everything I do is right. But what I'm doing . . . there's been some good in it. Because look at what we've done."

In 15 seasons, Billups has coached in 12 state finals, including eight in a row. Last Thursday, he guided the Bulldogs to a second straight Class 4A state championship, tying him with Gulfport's legendary Bert Jenkins for the most Mississippi High School Activities Association boys state titles with seven.

Lanier won again despite the graduation of McDonald's All-American Monta Ellis, who jumped to the NBA.

Billups, 53, has built a hoops machine on Maple Street in Jackson. Not even Jenkins—who won 866 games in 28 seasons—coached in eight consecutive state finals.

With a 463-73 record shouting orders from Lanier's bench, the demonstrative Billups has averaged more than 30 victories per year and won an astounding 86 percent of the time.

Billups' latest gold ball may be his most satisfying. Although senior point guard Al Graham, junior guard R.L. Horton and senior forward Kalaus Williams entered this season with some experience, most of the Bulldogs were new faces.

"We were young, but these kids wanted to be just like these Lanier teams that came through here," Billups said. "They do everything I ask them to do to win a ballgame."

Lavel Johnson, the Mississippi correspondent for the recruiting magazine Hoop Scoop, believes Billups will cherish this state crown the most.

"This was his top coaching job," said Johnson, who has watched Jackson basketball for 20 years. "This title is very satisfying for him because for so many years, people have said he wins because of his talent and not because he's a good coach. If anything dispels that belief, this does."

Billups' in-your-face style is relentless. During games, he alternates between chewing on referees and yelling at his players. Rarely does he sit. He paces the sidelines, roaring like an angry, nattily attired bear. Sometimes, he'll stop, arms folded, and scowl, staring at a striped shirt—or player—who has done him wrong.

He plays no favorites, either, and will berate a player for a mistake in a flash, whether the Bulldogs are leading by two points or 20.

"Whatever goes for one player goes for all of them," Billups said. "You've got to let kids know that there's only one way, the coach's way. In my case, it's Billups' way. My style of coaching is not going to change. Kids need to know that I'm going to be in their face every practice, every game, screaming and hollering."

Horton has come to appreciate Billups' tactics.

"He puts you through a lot," said Horton, who averaged about 25 points per game, scoring a career-high 50 twice. "He makes you feel like you almost want to quit. Players

ahead of me like Monta used to tell me to stick with it because it's going to make me better. He sees a player's potential before they ever see it. He brought a lot of stuff out of me that I didn't ever think I could do. He makes players work their hardest."

For all of his bluntness, there's also a gentler side to Billups, whether he's attending church with his team or hosting a Super Bowl party.

Many have noticed, including Lee Vance, a Jackson Police Department veteran of nearly 19 years and Lanier alumnus, Class of 1976.

"The greatest tribute I've ever seen or read is what his players and former players said about him publicly, the father-figure and nurturing comments that have been made," said Vance, JPD's Precinct 2 commander.

Former Lanier coach N.Z. Bryant, who won one of the Bulldogs' 15 state titles in 1969, said Billups enjoys a special bond with his players.

"Coach Billups has control of his players and they respect him," said Bryant, now deputy director of the MHSAA. "Young players nowadays have a tendency to have their own mind. Those kids are going to run exactly what he says."

Coach Thomas Billups has built a winning tradition and legacy in Jackson's inner-city. The high-level, high-profile programs that Billups has put together have ignited the competitive fancies of the other inner city teams making for some of the most competitively rivaled basketball in the State. I take pride in recognizing Coach Thomas Billups and the dynasty that he has built with some of our most talented inner-city young men.

TRIBUTE TO ANGELITA "ANGIE"
MONT O'BRIEN

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Angelita "Angie" Mont O'Brien, of Pasadena, CA. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our Nation's women.

Born in Los Angeles, where her parents had emigrated from Spain, Angie attended Los Angeles and Pasadena public schools. She received a bachelor of arts from the University of California Los Angeles in 1953, a master's degree from California State University Los Angeles in 1963, and a California Elementary Teaching Credential.

Angie taught in the Pasadena Unified School District, PUSD, for over 40 years. During her long career, she was an elementary school teacher, a guidance counselor, a Curriculum Resource teacher and an Opportunity Room counselor. A founding member of PUSD's Adopt-A-School District Advisory Committee, she initiated and implemented the Tutoring and Homework Assistance Program for PUSD and served on many PUSD committees.

When Ms. O'Brien volunteers for an organization, she jumps in wholeheartedly, whether it's chairing a fundraising dinner, designing invitations, developing long-term plans, or helping to oversee a school bond measure. Her list of community involvement is impressive. Past activities include serving as president of the Pasadena Parent Teacher Association,